

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

April 11, 2000 LB 1092

very adequate description of the bill. Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I'd like to ask you to vote to override the Governor's veto of my priority bill, LB 1092. LB 1092 was passed on Final Reading and it would have given the Department of Agriculture \$80,000 to hire a person familiar with federal and state meat inspection programs, although the Department of Agriculture broke it down to \$67,798. This person would be familiar with the federal and state meat inspection. Mr. Speaker, could I have a gavel, please.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Members, please hold your conversations to a minimum.

SENATOR ROBAK: Thank you. That person would hire...they hire would also be responsible for going across the state, talking to small producers and processors to determine the level of interest there; if there would be enough interest to have a state meat inspection pilot program. And the bill would have asked that person to report back to the Legislature, by November of 2001, to let us know the viability and feasibility of a state meat inspection program. With that information, we would have enough time to draft legislation to get a pilot program started, so we would understand how many inspectors we would need and how to go forward with the pilot program. I was truthfully shocked to say that I was shocked to discover the Governor had decided to veto this bill. I had not heard anything from the administration about my bill after any of the three votes. As a matter of fact, I have worked with members of the Department of Agriculture on the bill. Denis Blank and Chris Shubert, from the department, sat down and worked with me on revisions to the bill before Select File. In addition, I got a call last week from Denis Blank of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, who was in Washington, DC. The bill had passed on Final Reading; he wanted to know if there were any questions he could ask the federal food safety people about how we were going to begin our project. Mr. Blank also told me, yesterday, that the federal food safety people, seven total that had met with him, thought our plan was workable and that they would be happy to start working with us in getting the groundwork started. I thought that was a pretty good indication that we had the support of the Governor and his Department of Agriculture for giving small producers an opportunity to direct market their meat and to